

May 10, 2007

RECEIVED

MAY 14 2007

CEDAR RAPIDS  
CITY MANAGER

Jim Prosser  
City Manager  
City of Cedar Rapids

Dear Jim:

Welcome aboard! I'm glad you are at the helm and I applaud your initial efforts. I have lived here all my life, raised and educated six children, and I love this city. For the past 28 years I have made my living as a professional real estate appraiser and hope to continue in that capacity as long as I am able to do so. For the most part, I feel there is no better place to reside and work than here, and I believe my professional pursuits enable me to be of some help in making recommendations for improvements as you and the new council attempt to get this community on track for the future.

I was sorry to have missed the first round of Open House sessions which were held a few months ago; like every concerned citizen, I have some suggestions which I feel merit consideration. At the risk of stepping on a few toes, I have decided to list a few in this writing. My profession is grounded in objectivity, and I will make every effort to bring that perspective to this task and keep this from becoming an ox-goring list. I have written literally thousands of real estate appraisal reports on properties in this city, both residential and commercial, and have been active in condemnation work on a number of projects (as Mo Sheronick will attest to). I hope my comments are of some help to you and the council.

My everyday work takes me to all quadrants of the city, hence I am given the opportunity to see such things as traffic movement, infrastructure issues, et-cetera, in real time. Using all these data as a beacon, here is my list of some areas which I feel could be improved on for your consideration.

1. City employee numbers: I think your 5% reduction was a good start, but I think we still employ too many people and are top-heavy in administration. Perhaps the police should consider 40 hour weeks for patrol officers instead of 36; I was told by a resident who once lived in California that we have more police